

Greatest Of All Times

108

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Globally selected
PERSONALITIES



"I have heard of that idea [colonization], but it seems very impractical. We Ethiopians have one thing which you Europeans lack. It is a forceful and extensive race consciousness. I think that we are quite able to look out for our own interests."

Emperor
Menelik
II



17 Aug 1844 <::><::><::> 12 Dec 1913

Compiled by:
Prof Dr S Ramalingam
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AD-13,5th Street, Anna Nagar West, Chennai - 600 040

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17 Aug 1844



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Emperor Menelik II

Menelik II (*Ge'ez*: ዳግማዊ ምኒልክ *dagmawi mənīlāk*; *horse name* **Aba Dagnew** (*Amharic*: አባ ዳኘው *abba daññāw*); 17 August 1844 – 12 December 1913), baptised as **Sahle Maryam** (ሣህለ ማርያም *sahlä maryam*) was king of **Shewa** from 1866 to 1889 and **Emperor of Ethiopia** from 1889 to his death in 1913. At the height of his internal power and external prestige, the process of **territorial expansion and creation of the modern empire-state** was largely completed by 1898.

The Ethiopian Empire was transformed under Menelik: the major signposts of **modernisation** were put in place, with the assistance of key ministerial advisors. Externally, Menelik led Ethiopian troops against **Italian invaders** in the **First Italo-Ethiopian War**; following a decisive victory at the **Battle of Adwa**, recognition of Ethiopia's independence by external powers was expressed in terms of diplomatic representation at his court and delineation of Ethiopia's boundaries with the adjacent kingdoms. **Menelik expanded his realm** to the south and east, into **Oromo, Kaffa, Sidama, Wolayta** and other kingdoms or peoples.

Later in his reign, Menelik established the first Cabinet of Ministers to help in the administration of the Empire,

appointing trusted and widely respected nobles and retainers to the first Ministries. These ministers would remain in place long after his death, serving in their posts through the brief reign of [Lij Iyasu](#) (whom they helped depose) and into the reign of Empress [Zewditu](#).

<div>Menelik II</div> <div>ዳግማዊ ምኒልክ</div> <div><i>Negus</i></div> <div></div>	
Emperor of Ethiopia	
Reign	10 March 1889 – 12 December 1913
Coronation	3 November 1889
Predecessor	Yohannes IV
Successor	Lij Iyasu (designated but uncrowned Emperor of Ethiopia)
Born	17 August 1844 Angolalla , Shewa , Ethiopian Empire
Died	12 December 1913 (aged 69) Addis Ababa , Ethiopian Empire ^[1]
Burial	Ba'eta Le Mariam Monastery (now Se'el Bet Kidane Meheret Church) Addis Ababa , Ethiopia
Spouse	Altash Tewodros (1855–1865) Bafena Wolde Mikael (1865–1882) Taytu Betul (1882–1913)
Issue	Zewditu I Shoa Ragad Wossen Seged

Names

- Sahle Maryam (baptismal name)
- Abba Dagneu (horse name)

Dynasty [House of Solomon](#) (Shewan Branch)

Father [Haile Melekot](#) (King of [Shewa](#))

Mother Woizero Ejigayehu

Religion [Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo](#)

Styles of Menelik II of Ethiopia



Reference style

- [His Imperial Majesty](#)
- [Amharic](#): ግርማዊ; *girmāwī*

Spoken style

- Your Imperial Majesty
- [Amharic](#): ጃንዞይ; *djānhoi*
- lit. "O [esteemed] royal"

Alternative style

- Our Lord (familiar)
- [Amharic](#): ጌቶቅ; *getochu*
- lit. "Our master" (pl.)



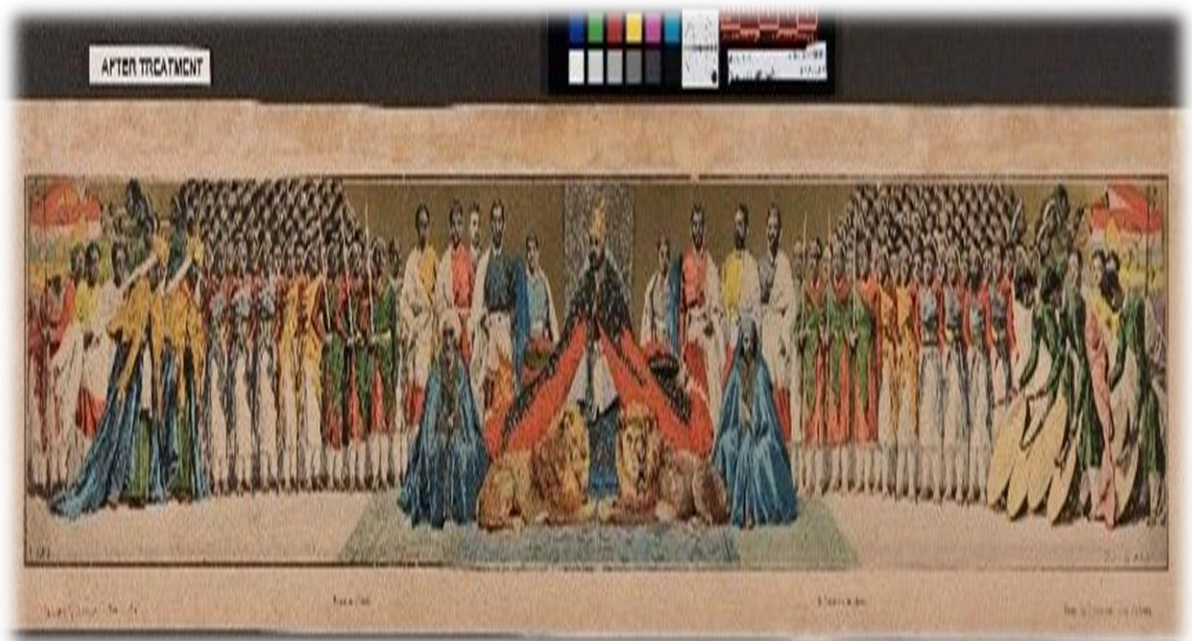
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<https://blogs.loc.gov/international-collections/2020/03/emperor-menelik-ii-of-ethiopia-and-the-battle-of-adwa-a-pictorial-history/>

Emperor Menelik II of Ethiopia and the Battle of Adwa: **A Pictorial History**

In Ethiopia today, few figures are as revered as Menelik II (1844-1913), the second-to-last reigning monarch of Ethiopia. Like Menelik I of the 10th century BC, the legendary son of King Solomon from whom he took his real name, Menelik II traced his descent to the Solomonic line of kings. But it is his role in the history of Ethiopia for which Menelik II is most revered to this day, for it was he who defeated a European nation – Italy – on the field of battle, to defend Ethiopian independence.

Menelik II was crowned King of Kings and Emperor of Ethiopia on November 3, 1889, with the additional royal sobriquet of "the Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah." The coronation, which took place in the great Entotto Mariam Church in Addis Ababa, was captured for posterity by the Italian artist Pio Joris (1843-1921) and subsequently reproduced in chromolithograph images, today exceedingly rare. In the painting below, the artist depicted the entire royal entourage in gorgeous color and detail. On the left and right, we see the two leaders of the Ethiopian Orthodox faith: the Archbishop of Alexandria and the Bishop of Ethiopia; the two lions of Judah, traditional symbol of the Solomonic line of kingship; and the "*negarit*" drums* and the drummers. On the left we see the lesser king and princes congratulating the Emperor, and flanking the Emperor are the various ministers of his cabinet. Among those present during the coronation in the Entotto Mariam Church are Ras Dargie, uncle of Menelik; Dejazmach Dereso, General of the king; Tekle Haimanot, King of Gojjam; Ras Mikael, governor of eastern and parts of southern Wollo; and Ras Mengesha-Atikim, governor of Damot, Agawmeder, Qwarra and adjacent areas.



**Coronation of King of Kings Menelik II. Chromolithograph of the painting by Italian artist Pio Joris in 1890
(Library of Congress African and Middle Eastern Division, Ethiopian Collection).**



Illustration published in "L'illustrazione Italiana," after a painting by the artist E. Zemenes, 1889 (Library of Congress African and Middle Eastern Division, Ethiopian Collection).

The illustration seen here commemorates the Wuchale Peace Treaty May 1889, by which the King sought to come to an agreement with Italy and avert warfare. In the upper left-hand corner we see a Star of Solomon with a cross in the middle; two important symbols signaling the marriage between the Old and New Testament in Ethiopian culture. The peace talks failed, however, and ultimately led to the famous Battle of Adwa.



The Battle of Adwa as painted by Shibru Nuru, 1975 (Library of Congress African and Middle Eastern Division, Ethiopian Collection).

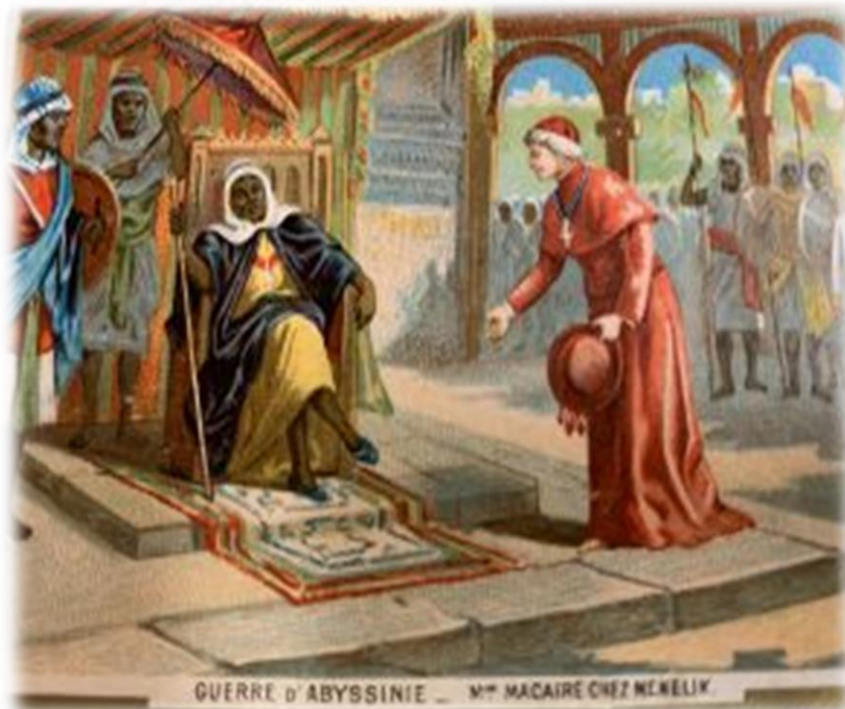
The year 1896 was a crucial year for Europe as a whole, and for Italy in particular. In that year, Italy was defeated by Ethiopia at the Battle of Adwa, signaling the end of the “might is right” era assumed by the European powers of the day. The defeat of the Italians was a major blow to the industrial world because it heralded the beginning of resistance against the industrial powers and the struggle for independence by the colonized African nations. In the painting shown here, St. George appears at the very apex, a reference to the proverbial Ethiopian belief that the Italians were defeated thanks to divine intervention. The drums used to herald the coronation of the King of Kings here become the battle drum that reverberates through the hills of Adwa, shaking the morale of the enemy.



Menelik II by Charles Leandre (1864-1922)
(Library of Congress African and Middle
Eastern Division, Ethiopian Collection).

Not surprisingly, some European artists rushed to the defense of colonialism. French artist Charles Leandre,) painted the caricature of Menelik that we see above. At the top right the artist wrote, “The benevolent Negus [i.e., King] takes advantage of the victory, but he never abuses it.” The underlying message, of course, is that the “beastly” and “barbarian” king is going to shame Europe (i.e., Italy), here represented by the helpless, naked woman.

In the aftermath of the war, Pope Leo XIII and King Menelik exchanged letters to effect the release of Italian Prisoners of War, and the Vatican turned to the Church of Alexandria for help with mediation. Trade cards of the day reflect current event in brightly colored images. Here we see Monsignor Macaire of the vicar of the Egyptian Coptic Church approaching Emperor Menelik on behalf of the Pope of Rome; a prudent example of religious diplomacy since the King of Kings and Monsignor Macaire both belonged to the Orthodox faith.

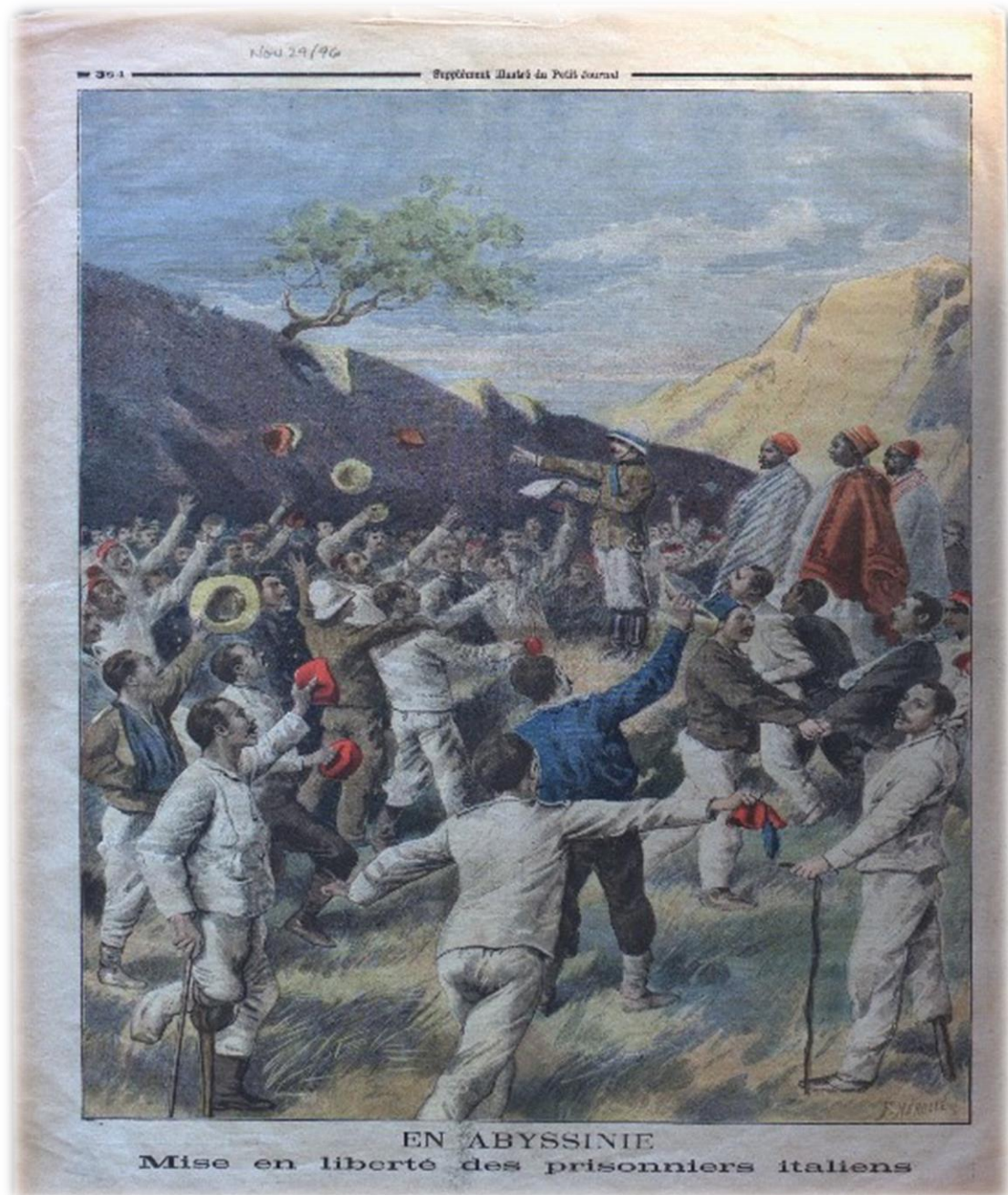


Monsignor Macaire of the vicar of the Egyptian Coptic Church approaching Emperor Menelik on behalf of the Pope of Rome. 1896 (Library of Congress African and Middle Eastern Division, Ethiopian collection of Trade Cards)



Letter from the Holy Father Leon XIII to Menelik and his reply to his Holiness. (Library of Congress African and Middle Eastern Division, Ethiopian Collection of Trade Cards.)

Negotiations between the two dignitaries bore results. On November 20, 1896, the Emperor released 200 Italian POWs in honor of the Queen of Italy's birthday, and successive releases were effected in February and June of 1897, when the last of the Italian POWs left the country.



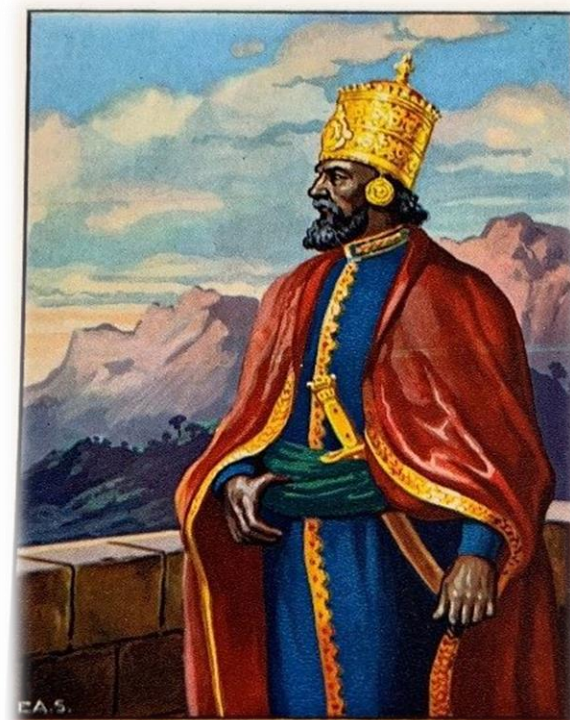
**Illustration of the jubilant prisoners of war when released.
[*Supplément Illustré du Petit Journal*, Nov. 29, 1896].
(Library of Congress African and Middle Eastern Division, Ethiopian Collection)**
The Battle of Adwa and Its Legacy

Every year in March, Ethiopians celebrate their victory at the Battle of Adwa. The hero of that battle, Menelik II, remains a venerated figure in Ethiopian society, and indeed worldwide.



Monument of Menelik II riding into battle. Addis Ababa; Erected, 1930. (Library of Congress African and Middle Eastern Division, Ethiopian Photograph Collection)

In marked contrast to the caricature shown above, Emperor Menelik II was often depicted as a noble and dignified figure in the art of his own time, as we see in this Trade Card here:



Imagination of a Spanish artist of the triumphant emperor, Menelik II (1896). (Library of Congress African and Middle Eastern Division, Ethiopian Collection of Trade Cards)

The King's call for arms against Italy resonates powerfully to this day:

Now an enemy that intends to destroy our homeland and change our religion has come crossing our God-given frontiers. Now, with the help of God I will not allow him to have my country. You, my countrymen, I have never knowingly hurt you, nor have you hurt me. Help me, those of you with zeal and will power; those who do not have the zeal, for the sake of your wives and your religion, help me with your prayers. (Gebre Selassie, *Tarika zaman Zadagmawi Menilek Negusa Nagast Zeİtyopya*, 1966, p. 225.)

Menelik's wife, the Princess Taitu, also commands respect in popular memory, and is often depicted as falling to her knees in prostration when the battle began and praying for victory. It was she who warned the Emperor about suspicious activities on the part of the Italian emissaries, scenting out political ploys under the cover of peace negotiations. Most important of all, she played a very strategic role by controlling the sources of water from the enemy.

Sehafe Te'ezaz Gebre Selassie, an eyewitness to the Battle of Adwa, concludes in his memoirs that no matter how organized an army may be, and no matter how sophisticated its arsenal of weapons, victory is only possible through God-given valor and skill. And in the Battle of Adwa, Menelik II proved the moral imperative in the struggle of Ethiopia against colonialism.

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Menelik's Invasions

https://military-history.fandom.com/wiki/Menelik%27s_Invasions

Menelik II's conquests	
 <p>LES INCIDENTS D'ETHIOPIE. Chef arabe vaincu par Menelik.</p> <p>The cover of French magazine <i>Le Petit Journal</i>, depicting attacks on Harar region</p>	
Date	1878–1904

Location	Present-day Ethiopia
Result	Shewan-Ethiopian victory
Belligerents	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Ethiopian Empire  Shewa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emirate of Harar Hadiya Kingdom of Kaffa Arsi Oromos Kingdom of Wolaita Dervishes <i>and others...</i>
Armed by:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  France  United Kingdom 	
Commanders and leaders	
 Menelik II  Ras Gobana Dacche  Habte Giyorgis Dinagde  Darge Sahle Selassie  Tessema Nadew  Welde Giyorgis Aboye  Ras Makonnen	Amir Abdullahi II Gaki Sherocho Kawo Tona Gaga Hassan Enjamo Mohammed Hassan <i>and others...</i>
Casualties and losses	
est. 6 million deaths	

Menelik's Invasions, also known as the **Agar Maqnat** (Amharic: "colonization, cultivation and christianization of land") were a series of wars and conquests carried out by Menelik II of Shewa to expand the Ethiopian Empire.

In 1866 Menelik II became the king of Shewa, and in 1878 began a series of wars to conquer land for the Ethiopian Empire and to increase Shewan supremacy within Ethiopia. Menelik II sought to build a "greater Ethiopia" and to incorporate lands from the era of [Amda Seyon I](#), prior to the [Ethiopian–Adal War](#) and Oromo expansions. He did this with the help of Ras Gobena's Shewan Oromo militia, who did most of the southern expansion and his son, Makonnen Wolde Mikael, who is known for his [Battle of Chelengo](#), afterwards which he incorporated Harar into Ethiopia. He is viewed as the founder of modern [Ethiopia](#).

Gurageland

In the late 1870s Menelik led a campaign to incorporate the lands of the Gurage people into Shewa. In 1878, the Soddo Gurage living in Northern and Eastern Gurageland peacefully submitted to Menelik and their lands were left untouched by his armies, likely due to their shared Ethiopian Orthodox faith and prior submission to Negus Sahle Selassie, grandfather of the Emperor. However, in Western Gurageland which was inhabited by the Sebat Bet, Kebena and Wolene fiercely resisted Menelik. They were led by Hassan Injamo of Kebena who on the advice of his sheiks declared jihad against the Shewans. For over a decade Hassan Injamo fought to expel the Shewans from the Muslim areas of Gurage until 1888 when Gobana Dacche faced him in the Battle of Jebdu Meda where the Muslim Gurage army was defeated by the Shewans, and with that all of Gurageland was subdued.

Arsi



-  Ethiopian Empire before conquests
-  Ethiopian Empire after conquests

Conflicts between the Kingdom of Shewa and the Arsi Oromo date back to the 1840s when Sahle Selassie led an expedition against the Arsi. Shewan rulers had longed to pacify and incorporate this territory into their realm. In 1881, Menelik led a campaign against the Arsi Oromo, this campaign proved difficult, as the Oromos abandoned their homeland to wage guerrilla war against the Shewan army, the Arsi inflicted significant losses against Menelik's forces through ambushes and raids. Menelik eventually left Arsi territory and his uncle Darge Sahle Selassie was left in charge of the campaign. In September 1886, Darge faced a large Arsi force at the [Battle of Azule](#), the result was an overwhelming Shewan victory as the Arsi Oromo were completely defeated by the Shewan army. After the defeat of the Arsi at Azule the province of Arsi was pacified and Darge was named its governor.

Harar

In 1886 an Italian explorer and his entire party were massacred by soldiers from the Emirate of Harar, giving the Negus an excuse to invade the Emirate of Harar. The Shewans then led an invasion force, however when this force was camped in Hirna the small army of Emir Abdullah II shot fireworks at the encampment, startling the Shewans and making them flee towards the Awash River during the [Battle of Hirna](#).

Menelik II wrote to European powers: "Ethiopia has been for 14 centuries a Christian island in a sea of pagans. If Powers at a distance come forward to partition Africa between them, I do not intend to remain an indifferent spectator." He did not, sending word to Emir Abdullah, ruler of the historic city of Harar which was pivotal to Muslim East Africa, to accept his suzerainty. The Emir suggested that Menelik should accept Islam. Menelik promised to conquer Harar and turn the principal mosque into a church, saying "I will come to Harar and replace the Mosque by a Christian Church. Await me." The Medihane Alam Church is proof Menelik kept his word.

In 1887 the Shewans sent another large force personally led by Menelik II to subjugate the Emirate of Harar. Emir Abdullah, in the [Battle of Chelenqo](#), decided to attack early in the morning of Ethiopian Christmas assuming they would be unprepared and befuddled with food and alcohol, but was defeated as Menelik had awoken his army early expecting a surprise attack. The Emir then fled to the Ogaden and the Shewans conquered Hararghe.

Finally having conquered Harar, Menelik extended trade routes through the city, importing valuable goods such as arms, and exporting other valuables such as coffee. He would place his cousin, Makonnen Wolde Mikael in control of the city. Harari oral tradition recounts 300 Hafiz and 700 newly-wed soldiers killed by Menelik's forces in the short battle. The remembrance of the seven hundred "wedded martyrs" became part of Harari wedding customs to this day, when every Harari groom is given fabric that is called "satti baqla" in Harari, which means "seven hundred." It's a rectangular cloth from white woven cotton ornamented with a red stripe along the edges symbolizing the martyrs' murders. When he presents it, the giver (who usually is the paternal uncle of the woman's father), whispers in the ear of the groom: "So that you do not forget.



**Conversion of Sheikh Bazikh Mosque
to Medhanealem Church in Harar**

The largest Mosque in Harar (known as Sheikh Bazikh, "The capital Mosque," or Raoûf), located in Faras Magala, and the local Madrassa were turned into churches, notably "Medhane Alem church" in 1887 by Menelik II after the conquest.

Welayta

In 1890 Menelik II invaded the Kingdom of Welayta. The war of conquest has been described by Bahru Zewde as "one of the bloodiest campaigns of the whole period of expansion", and Welayta oral tradition holds that 118,000 Welayta and 90,000 Shewan troops died in the fighting. Kawo (King) Tona Gaga, the last king of Welayta, was defeated and Welayta conquered in 1895. Welayta was then incorporated into the Ethiopian Empire. However, Welayta had a form of self-administrative status and was ruled by governors directly accountable to the king until the fall of Emperor [Haile Selassie](#) in 1974.

Kaffa

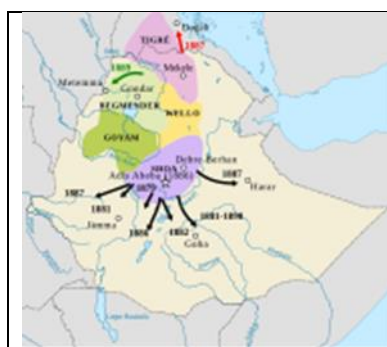


**Army of Ras Wolde Giyorgis after the conquest
of Kaffa bows before the Emperor**

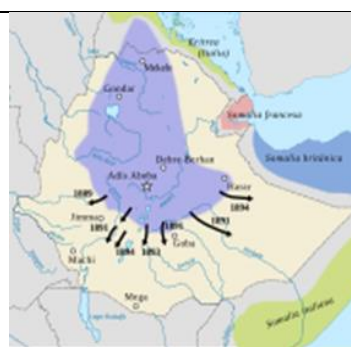
The Kingdom of Kaffa was a powerful kingdom located south of the Gojeb river in the dense jungles of the Kaffa mountains. Due to constant invasions from the Mecha Oromos, the Kafficho people developed a very unique defense system unlike anything seen in the Horn of Africa. The Kafficho built very deep trenches (Hiriyoo) and ditches (Kuripoa) along the borders of the kingdom to prevent intruders from entering. They also used natural barriers such the Gojeb River and the mountains to repel invaders. As a result, Kaffa earned a reputation of being impenetrable and inaccessible to outsiders.

In 1895 Menelik II ordered the Kingdom of Kaffa to be invaded and sent three armies led by Dejazmach [Tessema Nadew](#), Ras Wolde Giyorgis and Dejazmach Demissew Nassibu supported by Abba Jifar II of Jimma (who submitted to Menelik) to conquer the mountainous kingdom. Gaki Sherocho the king of Kaffa hid in the hinterlands of his kingdom and resisted the armies of Menelik II until he was captured in 1897 and exiled to Addis Ababa. After the kingdom was conquered Ras Wolde Giyorgis was named its governor.

Maps



1879-1889.



1889-1896.



1897-1904.

Kindly visit these Web Link to see the Videos

01] Emperor Menelik II and the Battle of Adwa [20:45]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qFhrx-jGfsE>

02] The untold history of the Great king MENELIK II

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6p_Ofxsfock [41:09]

03]

Emperor Menelik II Sword Handover at the National Museum

https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=4801783559940438 [15:18]

04] The Gras in Ethiopia: Carbines of Emperor Menelik II and Empress Taytu

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Us6YkdFukpY> [21:13]

05] Menelik II: The Battle of Chelenqo - 1887

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=45JPVjYOr_E [14:41]

06] Menelik II/Story in English

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1rGLG43jn48> [33:23]

Visit the Web Link to see more than 440 photos

<https://www.gettyimages.in/search/2/image?phrase=menelik+ii>



THE ORDER OF EMPEROR MENELIK II

<https://ethiopiancrown.org/portfolio/the-order-of-emperor-menelik-ii/>

The Order of Emperor Menelik II was founded in 1924 by the Regent, Ras Tafari Makonnen, during the reign of Empress Zauditu, and is one of the most attractive of the Imperial Orders.

The Order of Emperor Menelik II was founded in 1924 by the Regent, Ras Tafari Makonnen, during the reign of Empress Zauditu, and is one of the most attractive of the Imperial Orders. It is also sometimes referred to as "The Order of the Lion of Judah"¹ or as "The Order of the Ethiopian Lion"; indeed, these names appear to have applied to what was essentially one comprehensive honour. In 1996, the Crown Council decided to end this anomaly by establishing two separate Orders with distinct insignia and ribands: the old insignia designated for Menelik and the new design for the Lion. Thus both Orders (Emperor Menelik II and the Ethiopian Lion) can be said to have been founded in 1924 with modification into two Orders in 1996. Arthus-Bertrand, in Paris, has traditionally made the Order, while Spink, in London, has made the Order of the Ethiopian Lion.



The Order of Emperor Menelik II

The Order has always been in five grades of Knight Grand Cross, Knight Commander, Commander, Officer and Member, and is made by the Paris firm of Arthus-Bertrand. It is probable that the design of the Order was influenced by the Montenegrin Order of Danilo which had passed into abeyance with the fall of the kingdom and its absorption into the United Kingdom of Yugoslavia. This Order was also made by Arthus-Bertrand in Paris.

The Order of Menelik II, created by the then-Regent, Ras Tafari Makonnen, in 1924 in honour of the late Emperor, was, with the Trinity created at the same time, an "order of very high rank", according to Emperor Haile Selassie's memoirs.

The Order of Menelik was sparingly awarded in the higher grades: senior officers of the armed forces and high court officials were fortunate to retire with a Grand Cross of the Order and it may have been the highest Order available to prime ministers. It is known to have been presented to, among others, Prince Bertil, of Sweden, in 1945.²

The green and red enamel cross depicts the Ethiopian Lion and is suspended from a yellow riband bordered with the Ethiopian tricolour of green, yellow and red. Around the Imperial Lion are the words in Ge'ez: *Mo'a Anbasa Z. Y.*, an abbreviation for the phrase "The Lion of the Tribe of Judah hath conquered": *Mo'a Anbessa Zemene Gede Yehuda* which appears on the Imperial Crest, the Crown Council Crest, and on the Throne of Solomon itself.

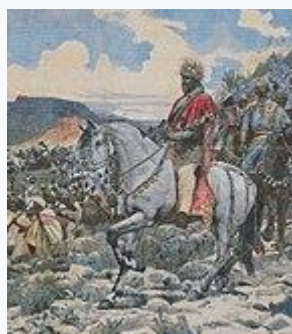
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First Italo-Ethiopian War

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Italo-Ethiopian_War

First Italo-Ethiopian War

Part of the [Scramble for Africa](#)





Clockwise from top left: [Menelik II](#) at Adwa; The death of [Major Toselli](#); [Dreste Baratieri](#) in Eritrea; [Ras Mengesha](#) on horseback; Illustration of [Dabormida's last rally](#); Depiction of the [Battle of Debra Ailä](#).

Date 13 January 1895 – 23 October 1896
(1 year, 10 months, 1 week and 1 day)

Location [Italian Eritrea](#) and [Ethiopia](#)

Result Ethiopian victory

Territorial changes Sovereignty of Ethiopia confirmed; [border](#) with [Italian Eritrea](#) delineated

Belligerents

[Kingdom of Italy](#)

[Ethiopian Empire](#)

Commanders and leaders

Francesco Crispi Oreste Baratieri Giuseppe Arimondi Giuseppe Galliano Pietro Toselli	Menelik II Taytu Betul Mengesha Yohannes Welle Betul
Strength	
35,000–43,700	80,000–125,000
Casualties and losses	
9,313 killed 1,428 wounded 3,865 captured	~10,000 killed

The **First Italo-Ethiopian War**, also referred to as the **First Italo-Abyssinian War**, or simply in Italy as the **Abyssinian War** ([Italian](#): *Guerra d'Abissinia*), was a war fought between [Italy](#) and [Ethiopia](#) from 1895 to 1896. It originated from the disputed [Treaty of Wuchale](#), which the Italians claimed turned Ethiopia into an Italian protectorate. Full-scale war broke out in 1895, with Italian troops from [Italian Eritrea](#) achieving initial successes against Tigrayan warlords at [Coatit](#), [Senafe](#) and [Debra Ailà](#), until they were reinforced by a large Ethiopian army led by Emperor [Menelik II](#). The Italian defeat came about after the [Battle of Adwa](#), where the [Ethiopian army](#) dealt the heavily outnumbered [Italian soldiers](#) and [Eritrean askaris](#) a decisive blow and forced their retreat back into Eritrea. The war concluded with the [Treaty of Addis Ababa](#). Because this was one of the first decisive victories by African forces over a European colonial power,^[13] this war became a preeminent symbol of [pan-Africanism](#) and secured Ethiopia's sovereignty until the [Second Italo-Ethiopian War](#) of 1935–37.

Background

The Khedive of Egypt [Isma'il Pasha](#), better known as Isma'il the Magnificent, had conquered Eritrea as part of his efforts to give Egypt an African empire. Isma'il had tried to follow up that conquest with Ethiopia, but the Egyptian attempts to conquer that realm ended in humiliating defeat in the [Egyptian–Ethiopian War](#). After [Egypt's bankruptcy in 1876](#) followed by the [Ansar revolt](#) under the leadership of the [Mahdi](#) in 1881, the Egyptian position in [Eritrea](#) was hopeless with the Egyptian forces cut off and unpaid for years. By 1884 the Egyptians began to pull out of both Sudan and Eritrea.

On 3 June 1884, the [Hewett Treaty](#) was signed between Britain, Egypt and Ethiopia that allowed the Ethiopians to occupy parts of the dissolved [Habesh Eyalet](#) which allowed Ethiopian goods to pass in and out of [Massawa](#) duty-free. From the viewpoint of Britain, it was highly undesirable that the French replace the Egyptians in [Massawa](#) as that would allow the French to have more naval bases on the Red Sea that could

interfere with British shipping using the Suez Canal, and as the British did not want the financial burden of ruling [Massawa](#), they looked for another power who would be interested in replacing the Egyptians. The Hewett treaty seemed to suggest that [Massawa](#) would fall into the Ethiopian sphere of influence as the Egyptians pulled out. After initially encouraging the Emperor [Yohannes IV](#) to move into [Massawa](#) to replace the Egyptians, London decided to have the Italians move into [Massawa](#). In his history of Ethiopia, British historian Augustus Wylde wrote: "England made use of King John [Emperor Yohannes] as long as he was of any service and then threw him over to the tender mercies of Italy...It is one of our worst bits of business out of the many we have been guilty of in Africa...one of the vilest bites of treachery".

On 5 February 1885, Italian troops landed at Massawa to replace the Egyptians. The Italian government for its part was more than happy to embark upon an imperialist policy to distract its people from the failings in post [Risorgimento](#) Italy. In 1861, the unification of Italy was supposed to mark the beginning of a glorious new era in Italian life, and many Italians were gravely disappointed to find that not much had changed in the new Kingdom of Italy with the vast majority of Italians still living in abject poverty. To compensate, a chauvinist mood was rampant among the upper classes in Italy with the newspaper *Il Diritto* writing in an editorial: "Italy must be ready. The year 1885 will decide her fate as a great power. It is necessary to feel the responsibility of the new era; to become again strong men afraid of nothing, with the sacred love of the fatherland, of all Italy, in our hearts". The struggle against the *Ansar* from Sudan complicated Yohannes's relations with the Italians, whom he sometimes asked to provide him with guns to fight the *Ansar* and other times he resisted the Italians and proposed a truce with the *Ansar*.

On 18 January 1887, at a village named Saati, an advancing Italian army detachment defeated the Ethiopians in a skirmish, but it ended with the numerically superior Ethiopians surrounding the Italians in Saati after they retreated in face of the enemy's numbers. Some 500 Italian soldiers under Colonel de Christoforis together with 50 Eritrean auxiliaries were sent to support the besieged garrison at Saati.^[19] At Dogali on his way to Saati, de Christoforis was ambushed by an Ethiopian force under *Ras* Alula, whose men armed with spears skillfully encircled the Italians who retreated to one hill and then to another higher hill. After the Italians ran out of ammunition, *Ras* Alula ordered his men to charge and the Ethiopians swiftly overwhelmed the Italians in an action that featured bayonets against spears. The [Battle of Dogali](#) ended with the Italians losing 23 officers and 407 other ranks killed. As a result of the defeat at Dogali, the Italians abandoned Saati and retreated back to the Red Sea coast. Italian newspapers called the battle a "massacre" and excoriated the *Regio Esercito* for not assigning de Christoforis enough ammunition. Having, at first, encouraged Emperor Yohannes to move into Eritrea, and then having encouraged the Italians to also do so, London realised a war was brewing

and decided to try to mediate, largely out of the fear that the Italians might actually lose.

The defeat at Dogali made the Italians cautious for a moment, but on 10 March 1889, Emperor Yohannes died after being wounded in battle against the *Ansar* and on his deathbed admitted that *Ras Mengesha*, the supposed son of his brother, was actually his own son and asked that he succeed him. The revelation that the emperor had slept with his brother's wife scandalised intensely [Orthodox](#) Ethiopia, and instead the *Negus* [Menelik was proclaimed emperor](#) on 26 March 1889. *Ras Mengesha*, one of the most powerful Ethiopian noblemen, was unhappy about being by-passed in the succession and for a time allied himself with the Italians against the [Emperor Menelik](#). Under the feudal Ethiopian system, there was no standing army, and instead, the nobility raised up armies on behalf of the Emperor. In December 1889, the Italians advanced inland again and took the cities of Asmara and Keren.

Outbreak of the war

On 25 March 1889, the [Shewa](#) ruler [Menelik II](#) declared himself Emperor of Ethiopia (or "Abyssinia", as it was commonly called in Europe at the time). Barely a month later, on 2 May he signed the [Treaty of Wuchale](#) with the Italians, which apparently gave them control over [Eritrea](#), the [Red Sea](#) coast to the northeast of Ethiopia, in return for recognition of Menelik's rule, a sum of money and the provision of 30,000 rifles and 28 artillery cannons.

However, the bilingual treaty did not say the same thing in [Italian](#) and [Amharic](#); the Italian version did not give the Ethiopians the "significant autonomy" written into the Amharic translation. The Italian text stated that Ethiopia must conduct its foreign affairs through Italy (making it an Italian [protectorate](#)), but the Amharic version merely stated that Ethiopia *could* contact foreign powers and conduct foreign affairs using the embassy of Italy. Italian diplomats, however, claimed that the original Amharic text included the clause and Menelik knowingly signed a modified copy of the Treaty. In October 1889, the Italians informed all of the other European governments because of the Treaty of Wuchale that Ethiopia was now an Italian protectorate and therefore the other European nations could not conduct diplomatic relations with Ethiopia. With the exceptions of the Ottoman Empire, which still maintained its claim to Eritrea, and Russia, which disliked the idea of an Orthodox nation being subjugated to a Roman Catholic nation, all of the European powers accepted the Italian claim to a protectorate.

The Italian claim that Menelik was aware of Article XVII turning his nation into an Italian protectorate seems unlikely given that the Emperor Menelik sent letters to Queen Victoria in late 1889 and was informed in the replies in early 1890 that Britain could not have diplomatic relations with Ethiopia on the account of Article XVII of the Treaty of Wuchale, a revelation that

came as a great shock to the Emperor. The tone of Victoria's letter was polite. The Queen informed Menelik that the restrictions on the import of arms were no longer in force and to prove this mentioned that [Ras Makonnen](#) received permission "to pass two thousand rifles through [Zeila](#), return to Harar" i.e. from Italy. But on the question of further diplomatic contacts, she left no doubt in Menelik's mind: "We shall communicate to the Government of our Friend His Majesty the King of Italy copies of Your Majesty's letter and of our reply."

[Francesco Crispi](#), the Italian Prime Minister, was an ultra-imperialist who believed the newly unified Italian state required "the grandeur of a second Roman empire". Crispi believed that the [Horn of Africa](#) was the best place for the Italians to start building the new colonial empire. Because of the Ethiopian refusal to abide by the Italian version of the treaty and despite economic handicaps at home, the Italian government decided on a military solution to force Ethiopia to abide by the Italian version of the treaty. In doing so, they believed that they could exploit divisions within Ethiopia and rely on tactical and technological superiority to offset any inferiority in numbers. The efforts of Emperor Menelik, viewed as pro-French by London, to unify Ethiopia and thus bring the source of the [Blue Nile](#) under his control was perceived in Whitehall as a threat to their influence in Egypt. As Menelik became increasingly successful in expanding Ethiopia, the [British government](#) courted the Italians to counter Ethiopian expansion.

The only European ally of Ethiopia was [Russia](#). The Ethiopian emperor sent his first diplomatic mission to St. Petersburg in 1895. In June 1895, the newspapers in St. Petersburg wrote, "Along with the expedition, Menelik II sent his diplomatic mission to Russia, including his princes and his bishop". Many citizens of the capital came to meet the train that brought Prince Damto, General Genemier, Prince Belyakio, Bishop of Harer Gabraux Xavier and other members of the delegation to St. Petersburg. On the eve of war, an agreement providing military help for Ethiopia was concluded. Russia had been trying to gain a foothold in Ethiopia, and in 1894, after denouncing the Treaty of Wuchale in July, it received an Ethiopian mission in St. Petersburg and sent arms and ammunition to Ethiopia. The Russian travel writer [Alexander Bulatovich](#) who went to Ethiopia to serve as a Red Cross volunteer with the Emperor Menelik made a point of emphasizing in his books that the Ethiopians converted to Christianity before any of the Europeans ever did, described the Ethiopians as a deeply religious people like the Russians, and argued the Ethiopians did not have the "low cultural level" of the other African peoples, making them equal to the Europeans.

In 1893, judging that his power over Ethiopia was secure, Menelik repudiated the treaty; in response the Italians ramped up the pressure on his domain in a variety of ways, including the annexation of small territories bordering their original claim under the Treaty of Wuchale, and finally culminating with a military campaign and across the [Mareb River](#) into Tigray (on the [border with Eritrea](#)) in December 1894. The Italians

expected disaffected potentates like Negus [Tekle Haymanot of Gojjam](#), [Ras Mengesha Yohannes](#), and the [Sultan of Aussa](#) to join them; instead, all of the Ethiopians flocked to the Emperor Menelik's side in a display of both nationalism and anti-Italian feeling, while other peoples of dubious loyalty (e.g. the Sultan of Aussa) were watched by Imperial garrisons. In June 1894, *Ras Mengesha* and his generals had appeared in Addis Ababa carrying large stones which they dropped before the Emperor Menelik (a gesture that is a symbol of submission in Ethiopian culture). There was an overwhelming national unity in Ethiopia as various feuding noblemen rallied behind the emperor who insisted that Ethiopia, unlike the other African nations, would retain its freedom and not be subjugated by Italy.

Menelik had spent much of his reign building up a vast arsenal of modern weapons and ammunition acquired through treaty negotiations and purchases from the Russians, French, British, and even the Italians. In 1884, Count [Pietro Antonelli](#) [\[it\]](#), the Italian envoy to [Menelik II](#), was able to import 50,000 Remington rifles and 10 million cartridges in exchange for 600 camels bearing gold, ivory and civet.^{[\[32\]](#)} After Italian sources dried up Menelik strove to increase his other imports, in the few years preceding the war the arms trade expanded considerably. In November 1893, Menelik's Swiss friend and advisor, [Alfred Ilg](#), went to Paris where he traded gold and ivory for 80,000 [Fusil Gras mle 1874](#), 33 pieces of artillery and 5,000 artillery shells. Menelik had also purchased 15,000 quick-firing rifles left over from the [Franco-Hova Wars](#) from the French arms trader [Léon Chefneux](#). By the end of 1894, 30,000 [Berdan rifles](#) and loads of ammunition were imported from Russia, and at least 250,000 cartridges were imported from [French Djibouti](#).

Course of the war



[Emperor Menelik II](#)



[Oreste Baratieri](#)

In December 1894, [Bahta Hagos](#) led a rebellion against the Italians in [Akkele Guzay](#), claiming support of [Ras Mengesha Yohannes](#). Units of General [Oreste Baratieri](#)'s army under Major [Pietro Toselli](#) crushed the

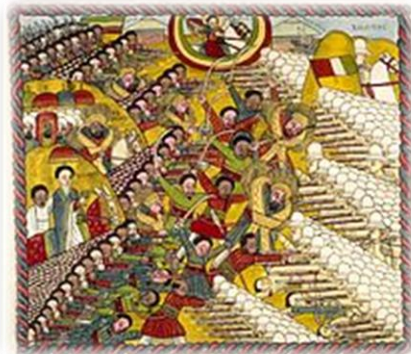
rebellion and killed Bahta at the [Battle of Halai](#). Baratieri suspected that Mengesha would invade Eritrea, and met him at the [Battle of Coatit](#) in January 1895. The victorious Italians chased the retreating Mengesha, defeating him again at the [battle of Senafe](#). Baratieri would promptly march into Adigrat on March 8 and occupying [Adwa](#) at April 2. He issued a proclamation, annexing [Tigray province](#) into [Italian Eritrea](#), he then moved into [Mekelle](#) and fortified old church above the town's spur. At this point, Emperor Menelik turned to [France](#), offering a treaty of alliance; the French response was to abandon the Emperor in order to secure Italian approval of the [Treaty of Bardo](#) which would secure French control of [Tunisia](#). Virtually alone, on 17 September 1895, Emperor Menelik issued a proclamation calling up the men of Abyssinia to join his army at [Were Ilu](#). Leaders of every region in Ethiopia were responding to Menelik's call to arms and would assemble an army of over 100,000 men before marching north to face the Italian invaders.

The next clash came at [Amba Alagi](#) on 7 December 1895, when [Ras Makonnen](#) brought up his largely [Shewan](#) army to the slopes of Amba Alagi in southern Tigray. They were confronted by Major [Pietro Toselli](#) with 2,000 Eritreans and local Tigrayan askaris that had joined the Italians for various reasons. Makonnen was joined by [Ras Mengesha Yohannes](#) and [Welle Betul](#), together they overran the Italian positions on the natural fortress and killed Major Toselli and most of his men. General [Giuseppe Arimondi](#), who had just arrived to reinforce Toselli, was barely able to escape and retreated with 400 survivors to the unfinished Italian fort at [Mekele](#). Arimondi left there a small garrison of approximately 1,150 askaris and 200 Italians, commanded by Major [Giuseppe Galliano](#), and took the bulk of his troops to [Adigrat](#), where General [Oreste Baratieri](#) was concentrating the Italian army.

The first Ethiopian troops reached Mekele in the following days. Ras Makonnen surrounded the fort at [Mekelle](#) on 18 December. By the first days of January, Emperor [Menelik II](#), accompanied by his Queen [Taytu Betul](#), had led their massive imperial army into Tigray and joined [Ras Makonnen](#) at Mekele on 6 January 1896. While Italian journalists filled sensational reports of their brave country holding out against "war-crazed black barbarians", Menelik had established contact with the Italian commander and gave him the opportunity to leave peacefully to [Adigrat](#). The commander was defiant until the Ethiopians cut off the water supply to the fort and on January 21, with permission from the Italian high command, agreed to surrender. Menelik allowed them to leave Mekelle with their weapons, and even provided the defeated Italians mules and pack animals to rejoin Baratieri. While some historians read this generous act as a sign that Emperor Menelik still hoped for a peaceful resolution to the war, Harold Marcus points out that this escort allowed him a tactical advantage: "Menelik craftily managed to establish himself in [Hawzien](#), at [Gendepata](#), near Adwa, where the mountain passes were not guarded by Italian fortifications."

Menelik decided against attacking the Italian headquarters at [Adigrat](#) and instead marched west towards the plateau of [Adwa](#). Baratieri feared that the Emperor intended to invade Eritrea and hence abandoned his positions at Adigrat and moved towards the area. On February 28, 1896, Baratieri then called an assembly of all his generals and informed them that their provisions would run out, and asked if the army should retreat back to [Asmara](#) or attack Menelik's army. All of his generals were opposed to retreat. Baratieri decided to rely on surprise by making up for his deficiency in manpower and issued a battle order on the next day.

Battle of Adwa



Painting depicting the Battle of Adwa

The decisive battle of the war was the [Battle of Adwa](#) on March 1, 1896, which took place in the mountainous country north of the actual town of [Adwa](#) (or Adowa). The Italian army comprised four brigades totaling approximately 17,700 men, with fifty-six artillery pieces; the Ethiopian army comprised several brigades numbering between 73,000 and 120,000 men (80–100,000 with firearms: according to [Richard Pankhurst](#), the Ethiopians were armed with approximately 100,000 rifles of which about half were [quick-firing](#)), with almost fifty artillery pieces. General Oreste Baratieri underestimated the size of the Ethiopian force, predicating that Menelik could only field 30,000 men; also, the Ethiopians were better armed, being equipped with thousands of modern rifles and Hotchkiss artillery guns together with ammunition and shells which were superior to the Italian rifles and artillery.^[41] Menelik had ensured that his infantry and artillerymen were properly trained in their use, giving the Ethiopians a crucial advantage as the Hotchkiss artillery could fire more rapidly than the Italian artillery.

On the night of 29 February and the early morning of 1 March, three Italian brigades advanced separately towards Adwa over narrow mountain tracks, while a fourth remained camped. However, the three leading Italian brigades had become separated during their overnight march and by dawn were spread across several miles of very difficult terrain. Unbeknownst to General Baratieri, Emperor Menelik knew his troops had exhausted the ability of the local peasants to support them and had planned to break camp the next day. The Emperor had risen early when spies from [Ras Alula](#), brought him news that the Italians were advancing. The Emperor

summoned the separate armies of his nobles and with the Empress [Taytu Betul](#) beside him, ordered his forces forward.

The Italian forces were hit by wave after wave of attacks, until Menelik released his reserve of 25,000 men, which overran an Italian brigade. Another brigade was cut off, and destroyed by a cavalry charge. The last two brigades were destroyed piecemeal in a devastating rout. By noon, the Italian survivors were in full retreat.



Italian prisoners of war waiting for repatriation

George Berkeley records that the Italian casualties were 6,133 men killed: 261 officers, 2,918 white NCOs and privates, 954 permanently missing, and about 2,000 ascari. Another 1,428 were wounded – 470 Italians (including 31 officers) and 958 ascari. With 1,865 Italians and 1,000–2,000 ascaris taken prisoner. Richard Caulk estimates that the number of Italians killed were 300 officers, 4,600 Italian rank and 1,000 askari for a total of 5,900 dead. As well as and 1,000 of those who escaped wounded and at least 2,000 captured. Citing contemporary figures, Caulk records Ethiopian losses to be 3,886 killed and 6,000 wounded. Whereas Berkeley estimates Ethiopian losses to be 7,000 killed and 10,000 wounded. In their flight to Eritrea, the Italians left behind all of their artillery and 11,000 rifles, as well as most of their transport. As Paul B. Henze notes, "Baratieri's army had been completely annihilated while Menelik's was intact as a fighting force and gained thousands of rifles and a great deal of equipment from the fleeing Italians." 800 captured [Eritrean Ascari](#), regarded as traitors by the Ethiopians, had their right hands and left feet amputated, some were even castrated. The Italian prisoners were generally treated better. Although, about 70 Italian prisoners were massacred in retaliation for the death of [Bashah Aboye](#), the officer responsible for the massacre was supposedly imprisoned by Menelik.

Outcome and consequences

The Italian telegraph lines brought news of the disaster to Italy and the world almost immediately. Italy was shaken by political crisis and popular demonstrations. Riots broke out in several Italian cities, and within two weeks, Crispi was forced to resign amidst Italian disenchantment with "foreign adventures". Soon after the battle, [Menelik II](#) later sent a message

to [Antonio Baldissera](#) informing him that he would conclude peace if Italy publicly renounced their protectorate claim over Ethiopia. Baldissera agreed to accept only if Ethiopia agreed to not accept protection from any other European powers. At this Italian arrogance, Menelik broke off talks and withdrew his original offer. Upon returning to his capital at [Addis Ababa](#), Menelik secured the [Treaty of Addis Ababa](#) in October, which delineated the borders of Eritrea and forced Italy to recognize "absolutely and without any reserve" the independence of Ethiopia.

The Russian support for Ethiopia led to a Russian Red Cross mission, though conceived as a medical support for the Ethiopian troops it arrived too late for the actual fighting, which came to end with the Ethiopian victory, at Adwa, on 1 March 1896, the mission arrived in Addis Ababa some three months after Menelik's Adwa victory. Owing to Russia's diplomatic support of her fellow Orthodox nation, Russia's prestige greatly increased in Ethiopia. The adventuresome Seljan brothers, [Mirko and Stjepan](#), who were actually Catholic Croats, were warmly welcomed when they arrived in Ethiopia in 1899 when they misinformed their hosts by saying they were Russians.

Following this victory, the European powers moved rapidly to adjust relations with the Ethiopian Empire. Delegations from the United Kingdom and France—whose colonial possessions lay next to Ethiopia—soon arrived in the Ethiopian capital to negotiate their own treaties with this newly proven power. Quickly taking advantage of the Italian defeat, French influence increased markedly and France became one of the most influential European powers in [Menelik's](#) court. In December 1896, a French diplomatic mission in Addis Ababa arrived and on 20 March 1897 signed a treaty that was described as "*véritable traité d'alliance*". In turn, the increase in French influence in Ethiopia led to fears in London that the French would gain control of the Blue Nile and would be able to "lever" the British out of Egypt. On the eve of the Battle of Adwa, two Sudanese envoys from the [Mahdiyya state](#) arrived at Menelik's camp in Adwa to discuss concentrated action against the Italians, in July 1896 an Ethiopian envoy was present at [Abdallahi ibn Muhammad's](#) court in [Omdurman](#). The British, fearing that Menelik would support the Mahdist revolt, sent a diplomatic mission to Ethiopia and on 14 May 1897 signed the [Anglo-Ethiopian Treaty of 1897](#) where Menelik assured the British that he would not support the Mahdists and declared the Mahdists as the enemy of his country. In December 1897, [Ras Makonnen](#) led an expedition against the Mahdists to seize the gold producing region of [Benishangul-Gumuz](#).

In 1935, Italy launched a [second invasion](#), ended in 1937 with an Italian victory and the annexation of Ethiopia to [Italian East Africa](#). Ethiopia was occupied by Italy until the Italians were driven out [in 1941](#) by the Ethiopian [Arbegnoch](#), [patriots](#) with assistance from the [British Empire](#).



Military history of Ethiopia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_history_of_Ethiopia

The **military history of Ethiopia** dates back to the foundation of early Ethiopian Kingdoms in 980 BC. [Ethiopia](#) has been involved in many of the major conflicts in the horn of Africa, and was one of the few native African nations which remained independent during the [Scramble for Africa](#), managing to create a modern army. 19th and 20th century Ethiopian Military history is characterized by conflicts with the Dervish State, Mahdist Sudan, Egypt, and Italy (which [annexed](#) Ethiopia to [Italian East Africa](#), for 5 years until its liberation during WWII), and later by a [civil war](#).

First Italo–Ethiopian War (1894–1896)

From 1895 to 1896, the [First Italo–Ethiopian War](#) was fought between the [Kingdom of Italy](#) and the [Ethiopian Empire](#) (Abyssinia). Unlike most of Africa, Ethiopia was able to avoid being conquered by the European powers. In 1895, Italian armed forces invaded Ethiopia from [Eritrea](#). But, because Ethiopia had established a single and incorporated army and broke ethnic barriers to unite, the Italian regular forces were decisively defeated within a year at the [Battle of Adwa](#).(for example [Leonid Artamonov](#)).

Boundary confrontations with the British Empire (1896–1899)

After incorporating [Sudan](#), [Kenya](#) and [Uganda](#) into the [British Empire](#), Britain now held colonies which bordered Ethiopia from both the north and south, sparking off a series of border confrontations with the Ethiopian government which subsided during the [Second Boer War](#). The Ethiopian military was deployed to the borders to prevent possible incursions from British colonial forces in the process of attempting to establish a clearly delineated border with the British Empire. A key factor in the preservation of Ethiopian independence was the state of its military, which was organized along European lines and was being trained by foreign advisors. Being able to resist foreign incursions along with establish relationships with European nations from which it could draw on for diplomatic support and arms sales gave pause to the surrounding colonial expansion by European powers.

Russian military advisor [Alexander Bulatovich](#) gave the following summary of the state of the Ethiopian military:

“Many consider the Abyssinian army to be undisciplined. They think that it is not in condition to withstand a serious fight with a well-organized European army, claiming that the recent war with Italy doesn't prove anything.

I will not begin to guess the future, and will say only this. Over the course of four months, I watched this army closely. It is unique in the world. And I can bear witness to the fact that it is not quite so chaotic as it seems at first glance, and that on the contrary, it is profoundly disciplined, though in its own unique way. For every Abyssinian, war is the most usual business, and military skills and rules of army life in the field enter in the flesh and blood of each of them, just as do the main principles of tactics. On the march, each soldier knows how to arrange necessary comforts for himself and to spare his strength; but on the other hand, when necessary, he shows such endurance and is capable of action in conditions which are difficult even to imagine. You see remarkable expediency in all the actions and skills of this army; and each soldier has an amazingly intelligent attitude toward managing the mission of the battle.

Despite such qualities, because of its impetuosity, it is much more difficult to control this army than a well-drilled European army, and I can only marvel at and admire the skill of its leaders and chiefs, of whom there is no shortage."

Russia allowed a number of Ethiopians to attend several Russian military cadet schools. From 1901 to 1913, approximately 40 Ethiopian officers attended military training in Russia. [Tekle Hawariat Tekle Mariyam](#), the future author of Ethiopia's constitution, was among those that attended.

In accordance with the order of emperor of Ethiopia, [Nikolay Leontiev](#) organized the first battalion of the [regular Ethiopian army](#). It was presented to Menelik II, in February, 1899. This battalion formed the cadre around which the army was organized. The company of volunteers was then organised from the former [Senegal](#) shooters (disappointed or unreliable for colonial authorities), which he chose and invited from Western Africa. They were trained by Russian and French officers. The first Ethiopian military orchestra was organized at the same time.

Second Italo-Ethiopian War

On October 3, 1935, [Fascist Italy](#) invaded the [Ethiopian Empire](#) from Italian Eritrea and [Italian Somaliland](#). The Ethiopians used prohibited [dumdum](#) bullets and mutilated captured soldiers, while the Italians used chemical weaponry in a number of battles.

The [Second Italo-Abyssinian War](#), the [Spanish Civil War](#), and the [Mukden Incident](#) are often seen as precursors to [World War II](#), and a demonstration

of the ineffectiveness of the [League of Nations](#). In 1941, after years of occupation, [Emperor Haile Selassie I](#) returned to what was now called [Italian East Africa](#). With the help of the British, the Emperor led an uprising to drive the [Italian Army](#) from his country after a [guerrilla war](#). Ethiopia's patriotic resistance from its many leaders made it resist being colonized by the Italians.

World War II



An American propaganda poster during the Second World War depicting an Ethiopian army bugler.

During the [East African Campaign](#), with the help of British forces, Emperor [Haile Selassie](#) joined the resistance groups against the [Italian Army](#). After some initial Italian offensive actions in 1940 (conquest of [Kassala](#) in Sudan and [British Somaliland](#)), British and Commonwealth forces launched attacks from the [Sudan](#) and from [Kenya](#). On 5 May 1941, the Emperor re-entered [Addis Ababa](#). By the end of November, organized Italian resistance in [East Africa](#) ended with the fall of [Gondar](#). However Italians maintained a [guerrilla war](#), mainly in northern Ethiopia, until September 1943.

Korean War

Ethiopia sent 1,271–3,518 troops as part of the [United Nation Forces](#) to aid [South Korea](#). The troops were known as the [Kagnew Battalion](#) under the command of General [Mulugueta Bulli](#). It was attached to the American [7th Infantry Division](#), and fought in a number of engagements including the [Battle of Pork Chop Hill](#).^[8] 121 were killed and 536 wounded during the [Korean War](#).

Derg Rule

In [1974](#), a military coup overthrew Emperor Haile Selassie and declared Ethiopia a republic. Between 1974 and 1984, a communist military junta called [Derg](#) ruled.

Ogaden War

[Somalia](#) invaded the [Ogaden](#) region and starting the [Ogaden War](#). Fighting erupted as Somalia attempted a temporary shift in the regional balance of power in their favour by occupying the Ogaden region. The [Soviet Union](#) switched from supplying Somalia to supporting Ethiopia, which had previously been backed by the United States. The war ended when Somali forces retreated back across the border and a truce was declared. Ethiopia was able to defeat the Somali forces with the aid of the USSR, [Cuba](#), and [South Yemen](#). This was the first conflict in which the [Mi-24](#) was used.

Civil War



A T-55 main battle tank guards an intersection following seizure of government control by rebel factions.

The [Ethiopian Civil War](#) was a 17-year conflict between the Derg government backed by the USSR against anti-communist rebels backed by the [United States](#). The conflict ended in 1991 with the Derg government defeated and out of power along with Eritrea gaining independence. The Eritrean insurgency that began in 1961 was helped by a nationwide Ethiopian guerrilla campaign of [OLF](#), [TPLF](#) and [ONLF](#) against the Ethiopian Derg government. At the end of the Civil war, with the Eritrean and Ethiopian victory over the Derg government, Eritrea gained its independence from Ethiopia in 1991 following a referendum.

Eritrean-Ethiopian War

The [Eritrean-Ethiopian War](#) was a border clash that took place from May 1998 to June 2000.

Fighting escalated to artillery and tank fire leading to four weeks of intense fighting. Ground troops fought on three fronts. Eritrea claims Ethiopia launched air strikes against Eritrea's capital Asmara while Ethiopia accused

Eritrea of striking first. The fighting led to massive internal displacement in both countries as civilians fled the war zone.

The conflict ended in stalemate and deployment of [UNMEE](#).

Somalia

In 2006, Ethiopia deployed troops to aid the [TFG](#) in the ongoing [Somali Civil War](#). ENDF deployed troops in the northern region to aid the TFG and in the southern region with support from the United States [Fifth Fleet](#). By January 2007 Ethiopian forces were about 200,000 troops. In November 2008 Ethiopia announced that they would be removing their troops, and all Ethiopian forces had left the country by January 15, 2009.

See also

- [African military systems to 1800](#)
- [African military systems \(1800-1900\)](#)
- [African military systems after 1900](#)
- [Ethiopian National Defense Force](#)
- [Ethiopian Air Force](#)
- [Ethiopian Navy](#)

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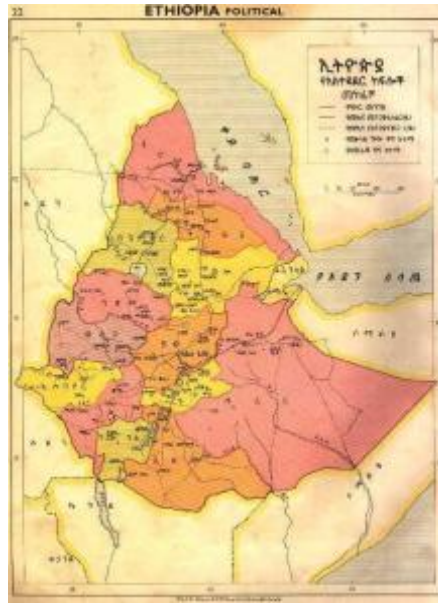
Treaty of Wuchale

<https://afrolegends.com/tag/menelik-ii/>

In Africa, Ethiopia is the only country which was never colonized by a European power. This was the result of the famous Battle of Adwa on March 1, 1896, which marked the Ethiopian victory against Italian colonialism. The Battle of Adwa against Italy arose from the deceitful 1889 Treaty of Wuchale between the Ethiopian Empire and Italy, a treaty whose article 17 had two different meanings in Amharic and Italian versions: The Amharic version recognized the sovereignty of Ethiopia and its relationship with Italy as just a diplomatic partnership, while the Italian version made Ethiopia Italy's protectorate. The moment that discrepancy/trickery was uncovered, Empress Taytu Betul was the first to agitate Emperor Menelik II and other men to stand up for liberty, and dignity against Italian aggression. I am publishing here the Treaty of Wuchale. Special thanks to the Horn Affairs website for publishing the English version in its entirety. Some claim that Article 3 actually paved the way for Italians to claim Ethiopian lands (Eritrea). Well, *here is the document of one of those treacherous treaties signed or rather forced upon Africans by European powers*. Thank goodness for Taytu Betul, Menelik II, and their team of loyal and intelligent ministers and interpreters. I have attached the pdf version too.

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Treaty of friendship and trade between the kingdom of Italy
and the Empire of Ethiopia (Treaty of Wuchale)



Map of Ethiopia before 1911

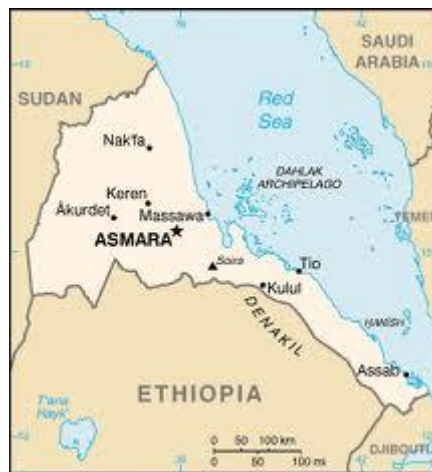
His Majesty King Umberto I of Italy and Menelik His Majesty The King of Kings of Ethiopia, in order to make meaningful and lasting peace between the two Kingdoms of Italy and Ethiopia have agreed to conclude a treaty of friendship and commerce.

And His Majesty the King of Italy having delegated as his representative, Count Pietro Antonelli, Commander of the Crown of Italy, Knight SS. Maurice and Lazarus, his extraordinary posted by His Majesty the King Menelik, whose full powers were found in good and due form, and His Majesty the King Menelik concluded in his name as King of Kings of Ethiopia, agreed and concludes the following Articles:

Article 1. There will be perpetual peace and friendship between His Majesty the King of Italy and His Majesty the King of Kings of Ethiopia and between their respective heirs, successors, servants and protected populations.

Article 2. Each Contracting Party shall be represented by a diplomatic agent accredited to I'altra and may appoint consuls, agents and consular officers in the other.

Such officials shall enjoy all the privileges and immunities according to the customs of the European governments.



Map of Eritrea

Article 3. To remove any ambiguity about the limits of the territories over which the two Contracting Parties shall exercise sovereign rights, a special commission composed of two delegates and two Ethiopians will draw on Italian soil with special signals a permanent boundary line whose strongholds are established as below:

- a) the line of the plateau will mark the Ethiopian-Italian border;
- b) from the region Arafali Hala, Sagan and Asmara are villages in the Italian border;
- c) Adi and Adi Nefas Joannes Bogos will be on the side of the Italian border;
- d) by Adi Joannes a straight line extended from east to west will mark the border between Italy and Ethiopia.

Article 4. The monastery of Debra Bizen with all their possessions will remain the property of the Ethiopian government but will never use it for military purposes.

Article 5. The caravans from or to Massawa to Ethiopian territory pay on one single law of the customs entry of 8 per cent on the value of the goods.



Emperor Menelik II, of Ethiopia

Article 6. The trade of arms and ammunition from or through Massawa to Ethiopia will be free for the only King of Kings of Ethiopia. Whenever they want to get the passage of such kinds will make regular application to the Italian authorities, bearing the royal seal. The wagons with load of weapons and ammunition will travel under the protection and cover of Italian soldiers until a confine Ethiopia.

Article 7. The subjects of each of the two Contracting Parties will be free to enter, travel, go out with their merchandise and effects in the other country and will enjoy greater protection of the Government and its employees. And, therefore, strictly forbidden to people on both sides armed contractors to meet many or few and pass their borders in order to impose itself on people and groped by force to provide food and livestock.

Article 8. The Italians in Ethiopia and Ethiopians in Italy or Italian possessions can buy or sell, take or lease and in any other manner dispose of their property no less than the natives.

Article 9. And fully guaranteed in both states the option for other subjects to practice their religion.

Article 10. Any disputes or quarrels between the Italians in Ethiopia will be defined by the Italian in Massawa or his delegate. The fights between Italians and Ethiopians will be defined by the Italian in Massawa or his delegate and a delegate of the Ethiopian.



Empress Taytu Betul of Ethiopia

Article 11. Dying in an Italian in Ethiopia or an Ethiopian in Italian territory, the local authorities were carefully kept all his property and held at the disposal of government to which the deceased belonged.

Article 12. In any event, circumstance or for any Italians accused of a crime will be judged by the Italian. That is why the Ethiopian authorities shall immediately deliver to the Italians in Massawa accused of having committed a crime.

They also accused the Ethiopians of crime committed on Italian soil will be judged by the Ethiopian.

Article 13. His Majesty the King of Italy and His Majesty the King of Kings of Ethiopia is obliged to deliver criminals who may have become refugees, to escape punishment by the rulers of one on the other domains.

Article 14. The slave trade was against the principles of the Christian religion, His Majesty the King of Kings of Ethiopia is committed to prevent it with all his power, so that no caravan of slaves can cross its member.

Article 15. This Treaty shall be valid throughout the Ethiopian Empire.

Article 16. While in the present Treaty, after five years from the date of signature, one of two High Contracting Parties may wish to introduce some modifications to do so, but he must prevent the other a year earlier, while remaining firm and every single concession on territory.



The Battle of Adwa, 1896

Article 17. His Majesty the King of Kings of Ethiopia can [1] use the Government of His Majesty the King of Italy for all treatments that did business with other powers or governments.

Article 18. If His Majesty the King of Kings of Ethiopia intends to grant special privileges to nationals of third state to establish businesses and industries in Ethiopia, will always be given, under equal conditions, preference to the Italians.

Article 19. This treaty being drafted in Italian and Amharic and the two versions agree with each other perfectly, both texts shall be deemed official, and will in every respect equal faith.

Article 20. This Treaty shall be ratified.

In witness whereof, Count Pietro Antonelli on behalf of His Majesty the King of Italy, His Majesty the King of King Menelik of Ethiopia, in his own name, signed and affixed their seal to this Treaty, at the camp Ucciali of 25 miazia 1881 corresponding to May 2, 1889.

Imperial Seal of Ethiopia

For His Majesty the King of Italy Pietro Antonelli

Ratification of MS, Monza, September 29, 1889

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Family Profile

<https://gw.geneanet.org/frebault?lang=en&n=du+shewa&oc=0&p=menelik>

♂ **Menelik II du Shewa**

(*Menelik du Shewa*)

Sahle Maryam

negus du Shewa (1866-1889), *empereur d'Ethiopie* (1889-1913)

- Born August 17, 1844 (Saturday)
- Deceased December 12, 1913 (Friday), aged 69 years old

Parents

Spouses, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren

- Married in 1864 to [Alitash du Qwara](#) (Parents : ♂ [Téwodros du Qwara](#), empereur d'Ethiopie 1818-1868 & ♀ [Terounesh Woubé](#)) , divorced in 1865
- Relationship with [Woyzero Abechi](#) with
 - ♀ [Zewditou du Shewa](#), impératrice d'Ethiopie 1876-1930 Married in 1882 to [Araya Selassie Yohannes du Tigre](#) 1867-1888
[Zewditou du Shewa](#), impératrice d'Ethiopie 1876-1930 Married in 1900 to [Gugsa Welle de Semien](#) 1875-1930
 - Married in 1883 to [Taytu Betul de Semien](#), born in 1851, deceased February 11, 1918 (Monday) aged 67 years old (Parents : ♂ [Betul Haile Maryam de Semien](#) & ♀ [??](#))
- Relationship with [??](#) with
 - ♀ [Shoaregga du Shewa](#) 1867- Married to [Wedadjo Gobena](#) with
 - ♂ [Wosan Seged du Shewa](#) †1908
[Shoaregga du Shewa](#) 1867- Married to [Mikael Ali de Wollo](#), ras de Wollo 1850-1918 with
 - ♂ [Lij Iyasu de Wollo](#), empereur d'Ethiopie 1895-1935 Married in May, 1909 to [Romanework Mengesha du Tigre](#)
[Lij Iyasu de Wollo](#), empereur d'Ethiopie 1895-1935 Married in April, 1910 to [Sabla Wangel Hailu du Godjam](#)
 - ♀ [Tewabech de Wollo](#) Married to [Seyum Mangasha du Tigre](#) 1887-1960 with :
 - ♀ [Wolete Israel Seyoum du Tembien](#) 1906-1988
 - ♀ [Zenebe Worq de Wollo](#) Married to [Bezabih du Godjam](#)

Family Tree Preview

[Wossen
Seged du
Shewa](#), prince
du
[Shewa](#) †1813

[??](#)

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Sahle Selassie du Shewa, *negus du Shewa* ca 1795-1847

Bezabish
Wolde

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Haile Meleket du Shewa, *negus du Shewa* 1824-1855

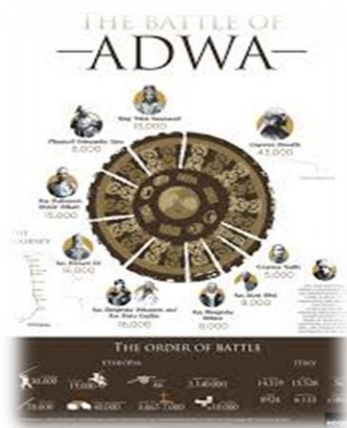
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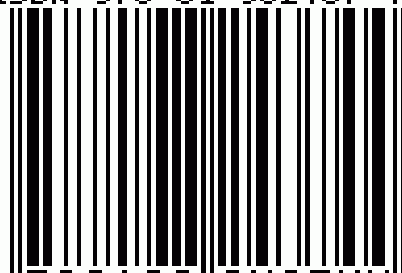
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Menelik II du Shewa, *negus du Shewa* 1844-1913

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